

Wildland-Urban Interface and Sprinkler Related Procedures

PURPOSE

On January 1, 2013 Sonoma County adopted the 2013 California Building, Fire and Residential Codes. There was also minor changes to the residential fire sprinkler requirements. Below are procedures relating to these items.

PROCEDURES

A. CBC Chapter 7-A and CRC Section 327 Wildland-Urban Interface Procedures

1. Permit and Resource Management Department (PRMD) Building Division is responsible for the building standards contained in these requirements, which include:
 - a. Roof coverings, valleys and gutters
 - b. Attic and rafter bay ventilation
 - c. Eave and soffit protection
 - d. Exterior wall and opening protection
 - e. Decking
 - f. Appendage and underfloor protection

2. The building standard requirements listed in item A-1 above apply to new buildings, remodels, additions and change of occupancy and the code gives the local jurisdiction discretionary authority relative to accessory structures.
 - a. These requirements will apply to new single family dwellings, guest houses, second units, and all new commercial buildings.
 - b. These requirements will NOT apply to accessory structures classified as a U occupancy associated with a single family dwelling, such as detached garages (one or two story), storage buildings, workshops, barns, pool houses, artist's studios, etc. when exempted by code.
 - c. New buildings include newly constructed buildings and replacement buildings when the entire structure is replaced.
 - d. New factory built homes where application for the building permit is made after January 1, 2008 are required to comply with these requirements.
 - e. New manufactured and mobile homes where application for the building permit is made after September 1, 2008 are required to comply with these requirements.
 - f. Any building located less than 30-0 feet from property lines and located in the SRA only. (see Fire Code Tables)

3. Requests for deviations from these building standards or mitigation relative to these building standards will be processed utilizing the Alternate Materials and Methods process and approved by the Building and Fire Code Official.

B. Defensible Space Vegetation Management and Clearing Requirements

1. Sonoma County Fire and Emergency Services will continue to be responsible for defensible space vegetation management and clearing requirements.
 - a. Defensible space vegetation management and clearing requirements apply to all projects subject to the Fire Safe Standards in Chapter 13 of the County Code and Chapter 49 of the California Fire Code as adopted and amended by Sonoma County Code.
 - b. Requests for deviations from the defensible space vegetation management standards or mitigation relative to these standards will be reviewed by the Fire Code Official.

C. Fire Approvals

1. Fire Prevention staff will begin using the Permits Plus (PP) *Approvals* screen (Item 64) to indicate when a project requires a final approval before the building permit can be signed off and the PP status changed to FINALED.
 - a. When the permit is approved for issuance, Fire Prevention staff will enter a required FIRE-FINAL entry if they need to verify requirements during the course of the job.
 - b. When their requirements have been approved, Fire Prevention staff will approve this entry. This process will insure that all the required approvals print on the building inspection request, and that the project cannot be finalized until all the Fire Code requirements have been met.

D. Sprinkler Requirements

1. Sprinkler requirements in Chapter 7 and Chapter 13 of the County Code have changed to allow more exemptions and also to require sprinklers to be installed in existing structures when some large additions are added.
2. Fire Prevention staff will make the determination of when sprinklers are required instead of Building Plan Check staff. Building Plan Check staff will still determine the occupancy classification of the structure,
3. Sprinkler requirements for manufactured and mobile housing are as follows:

All previously owned and relocated manufactured and mobile homes constructed before 2014 in accordance with Title 25, of the California Code of Regulations are NOT required to have fire sprinkler systems installed.

- a. Pre-owned manufactured and mobile homes constructed before January 1st, 2014 in accordance with Title 25, of the California Code of Regulations, that are moved from outside Sonoma County or that were not originally legally installed on a property anywhere within Sonoma County, and are moved to a property within Sonoma County's jurisdiction, DO NOT need require fire sprinklers unless installed on a permanent foundation.
- b. All new manufactured and mobile homes constructed on or after January 1st, 2014 installed on a property are required to be fire sprinkled whether or not they were shipped from the factory with fire sprinklers. All units shipped without fire sprinklers shall have fire sprinklers installed.
- c. California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) is responsible for plan check, permitting, and inspection of any alterations to all manufactured and mobile homes including the installation of fire sprinklers.
- d. A separate building permit will be required for water storage tanks greater than 5,000 gallons. Fire Prevention staff will perform a final inspection and approval of fire sprinkler systems, including a flow test.

E. Process Changes

1. Customer service staff

- a. Continue to send all new structures, residential room additions, and all commercial projects to the Fire Customer Service Desk.
- b. Questions concerning sprinklers, mitigation for sprinkler requirements, vegetation management and clearing, or State Responsibility Area (SRA) location should be directed to the Fire Customer Service Desk.
- c. Questions concerning the Wildland-Urban Interface building standards listed above, including approved materials and alternate methods of compliance, should be directed to the Building Customer Service Desk.

2. Fire Prevention staff

- a. Determine if sprinklers are required, and check the appropriate box on the permit application, make all appropriate notes in Permits Plus (PP). Place the sprinkler stamp on all plan sets when appropriate. Make a note in Permits Plus when SRA codes apply.
- b. When the permit is approved for issuance, enter a required FIRE-FINAL and FIRE SPRINKLERS (line 64 and 62) entry if Fire Code requirements must be verified during the course of the permitted work.
- c. When these requirements have been approved, approve the FIRE-FINAL entry. This process will insure that all the required approvals print on the building inspection request, and that the project cannot be finaled until all the Fire Code requirements have been met.

3. Plan check staff
 - a. When sprinklers are required by Fire Prevention staff, insure that the plans, including the appropriate approved revised sheets, are stamped at the end of the plan check process.
 - b. When the CBC Chapter 7-A or CRC Section 327 Wildland-Urban Interface requirements apply to a new structure, insure that these requirements are shown on the plans and plans are stamped with the SRA stamp.
 - c. Do not simply add notes to the plans, but require that they be shown on the plans by the plan preparer.

Approved by:

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